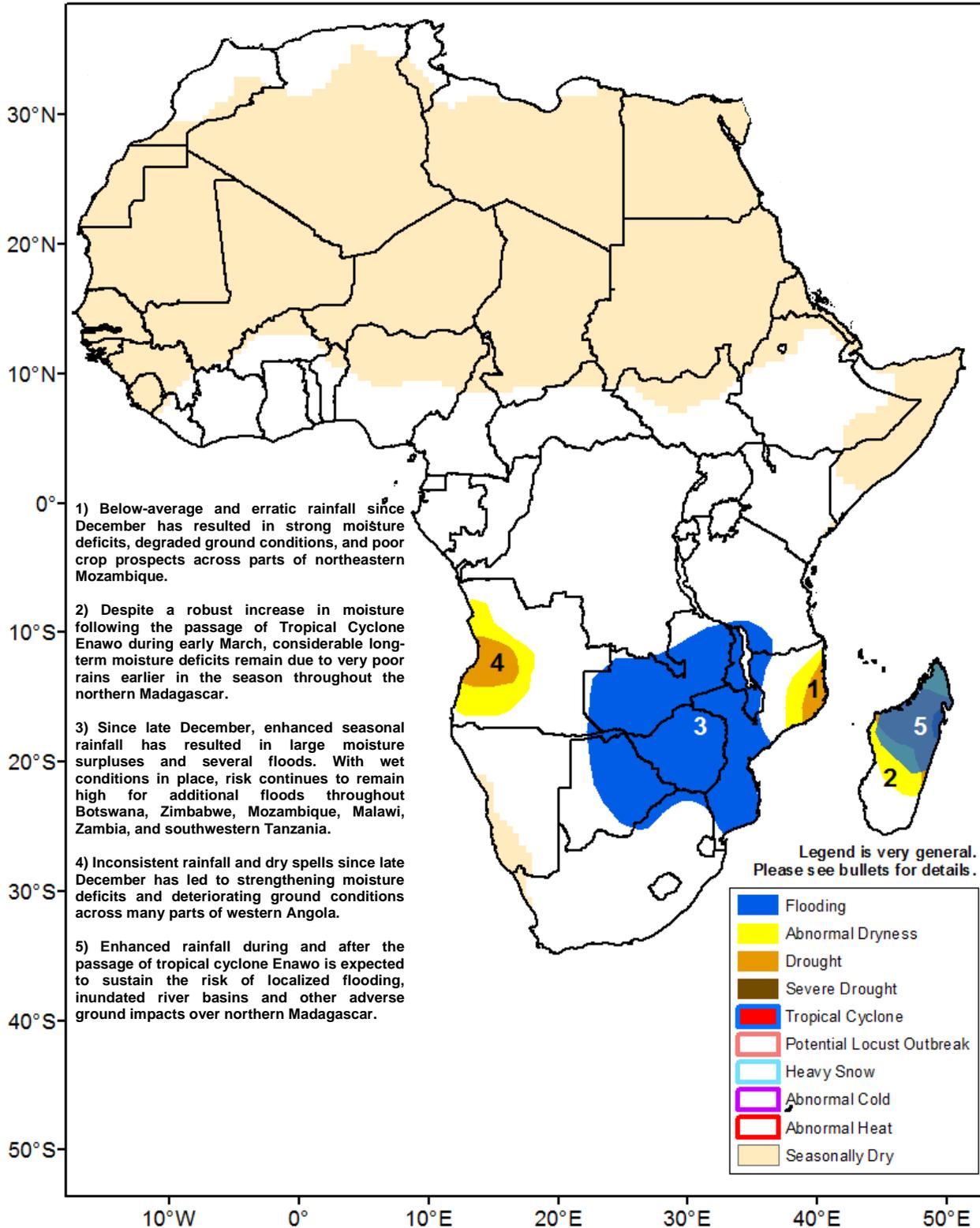




Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook March 16 – March 22, 2017

- Seasonal dryness strengthens across parts of western and central Angola.
- Following the passage of Tropical Cyclone Enawo, seasonal moisture deficits remain across Madagascar.



Flooding and damages to infrastructure reported in Madagascar

During the last week, the passage of Tropical Cyclone Enawo over northern Madagascar reportedly led to localized flooding, damages to infrastructure and fatalities. According to satellite rainfall estimates, the highest weekly accumulations (>150mm) were received across northern and eastern provinces of the country with locally higher amounts in excess of 300mm (Figure 1). The heavy precipitation totals were felt over areas that have been experiencing anomalous dryness and drought conditions throughout much of the rains season. On the continent, a band of moderate to locally heavy rainfall (>100mm) was received across southern Angola, extending northeastward to southern Tanzania. However, lighter rainfall totals (10-25mm) were received in the southern countries, continuing a trend of weaker rainfall amounts as the monsoon season draws to a close.

Along the western and eastern edges of the Africa continent, seasonal rainfall has remained erratic and poorly distributed. In the western provinces of Angola, suppressed rainfall during the past couple of weeks has led to strengthening of seasonal dryness, as some local areas have observed less than half of the normal rainfall. Towards the east, portions of northeastern Mozambique and Madagascar have continued to observe below-average rainfall. With the passage of Tropical Storm Enawo bringing significant increases of rainfall and ground moisture over Madagascar during the last week, moisture deficits still remain below average for the season (Figure 2), with some local areas still registering less than half of normal.

Suppressed rains received so far in East Africa

Following a favorably enhanced rainfall pattern during the month of February across many parts of East Africa, early season rainfall has since been slightly suppressed since the beginning of March. Analysis of running 30-day moisture anomalies continue to depict positive conditions associated with unusually heavy rainfall earlier in the period, however, light to moderate deficits have developed in the region over the past couple of weeks. Some local areas in the eastern SNNP and southern Oromia provinces of Ethiopia have registered early season deficits ranging between 25-50mm (Figure 3). Similarly, early season dryness has strengthened across many parts of southwestern and southern Kenya. Considering a very poor rainfall performance from the previous season across East Africa, the continuation of poor rainfall in March is particularly concerning for early season crop and ground impacts. Forecasts suggest a return towards more seasonable rainfall during the middle of March.

Increased rains registered in Gulf of Guinea region

During the past 2-3 weeks, the ITCZ rain belt has gradually shifted towards the north, bringing moderate to locally heavy rainfall accumulations throughout the southern Gulf of Guinea countries, and signaling the onset of seasonal rains for the year throughout the region. Early season rainfall has been particularly heavy in southern Nigeria, where moisture surpluses have rapidly developed in the Imo and Abia provinces of the country. However, moisture deficits have begun to develop in the central northern provinces of Ghana, Togo, and Benin, suggesting a slight delay in the northward climatological migration of the ITCZ during March. Forecasts suggest an increase rainfall in Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, and southern Burkina Faso during the next week.

Note: The hazards outlook map on page 1 is based on current weather/climate information and short and medium range weather forecasts (up to 1 week). It assesses their potential impact on crop and pasture conditions. Shaded polygons are added in areas where anomalous conditions have been observed. The boundaries of these polygons are only approximate at this continental scale. This product does not reflect long range seasonal climate forecasts or indicate current or projected food security conditions.

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